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(54) **SWIMMING CAPS**

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See application file for complete search history.

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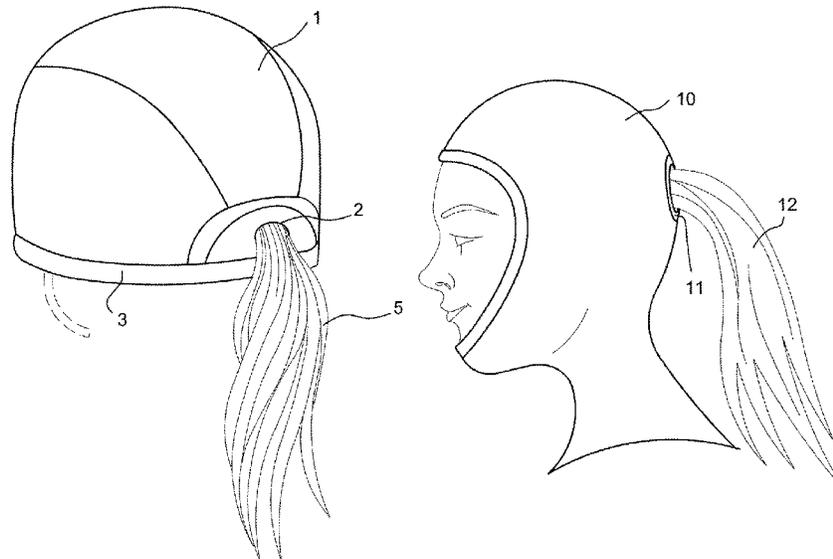
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A swimming cap made of a synthetic rubber and sized to substantially cover the scalp of a wearer's head, the cap having an opening formed in a posterior region thereof such that the wearer's hair can pass through the opening to form a ponytail.

**6 Claims, 3 Drawing Sheets**





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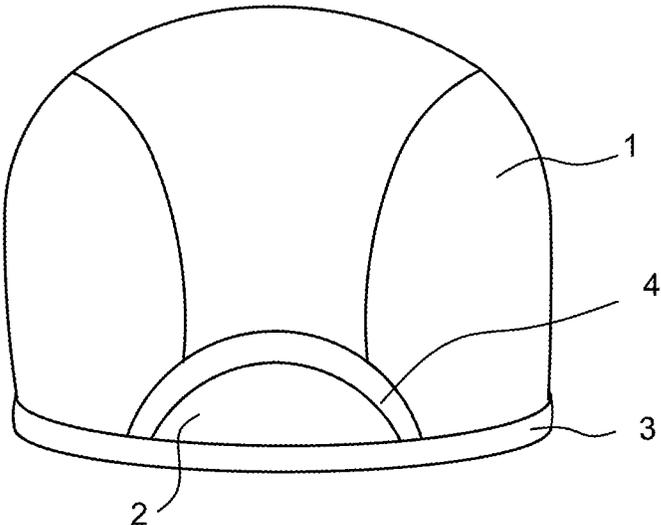


FIG. 1

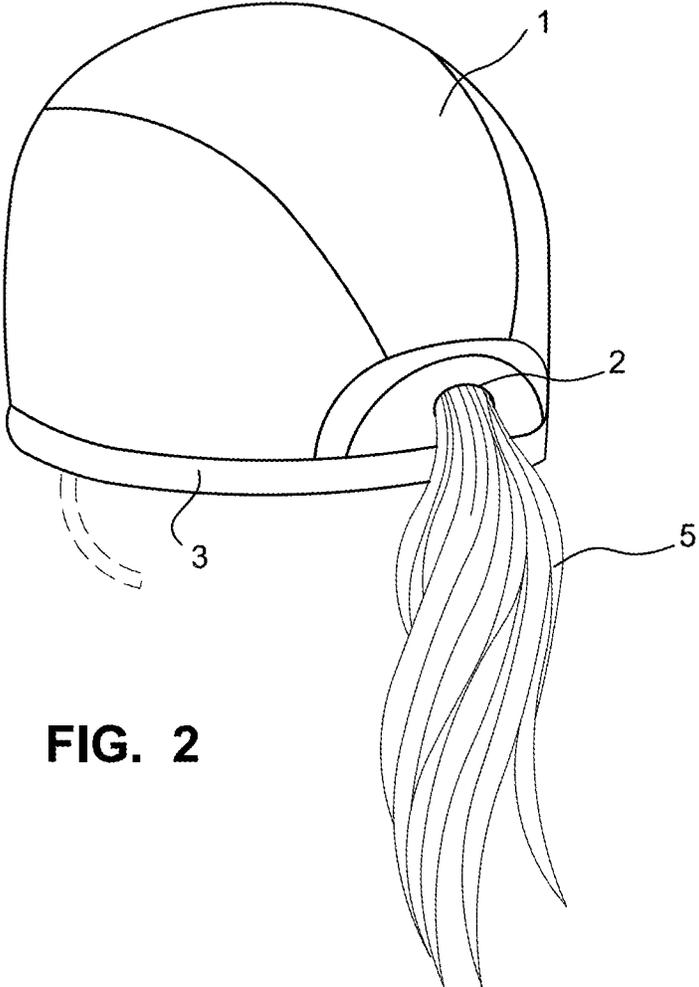


FIG. 2

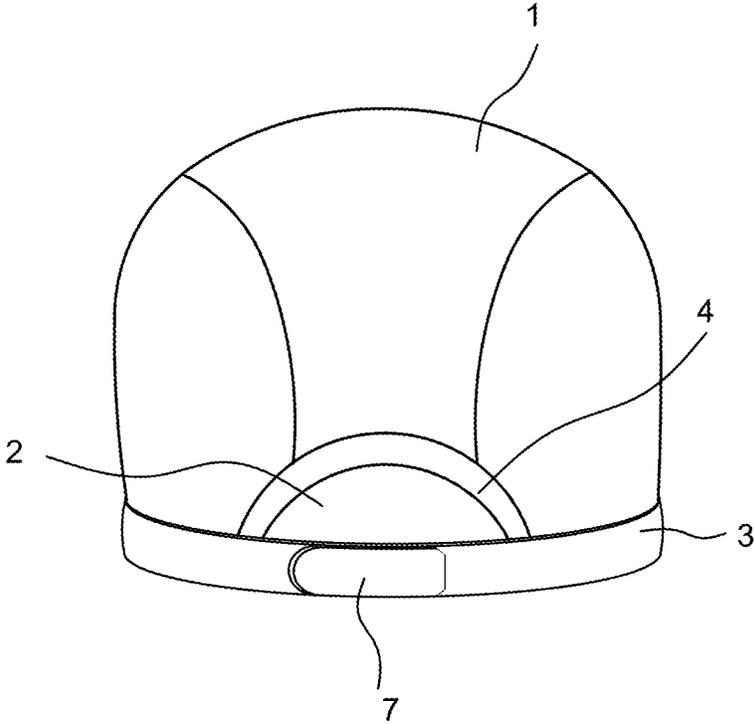
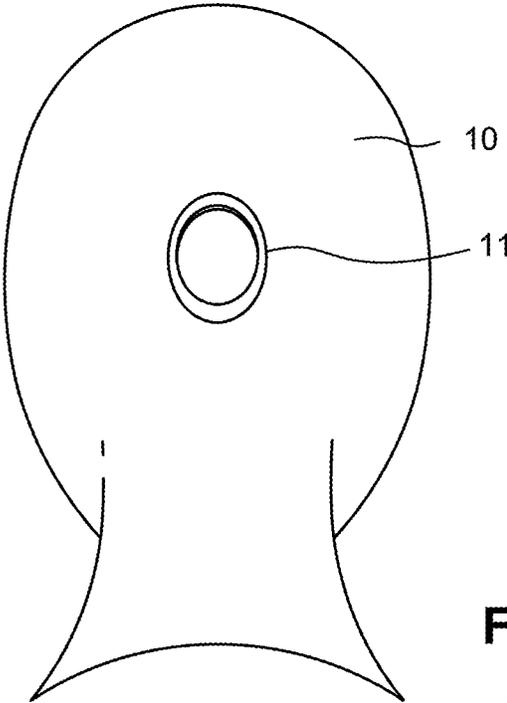
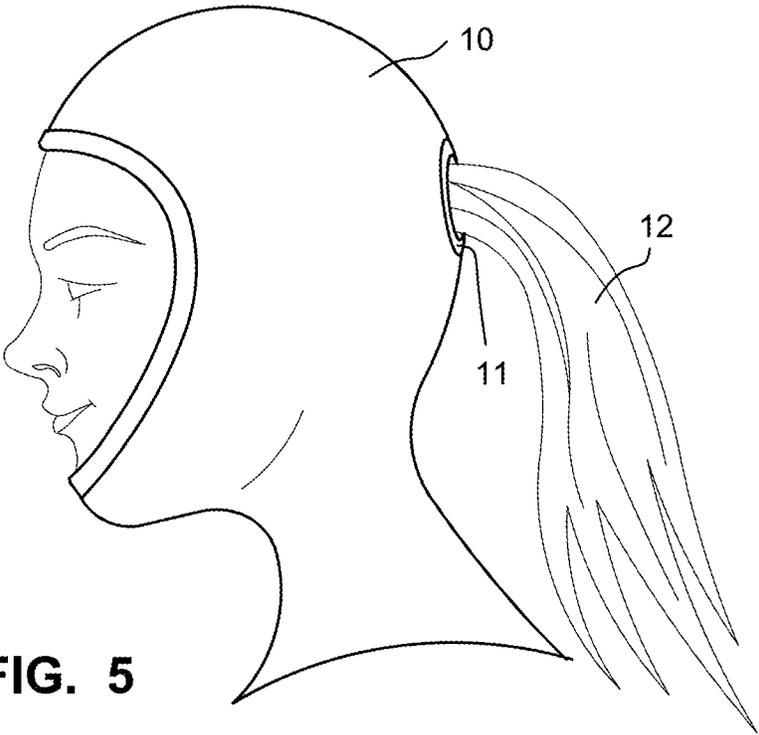


FIG. 3



**FIG. 4**



**FIG. 5**

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## SWIMMING CAPS

### TECHNICAL FIELD

The present invention relates to swimming caps.

### BACKGROUND

Swimming or bathing caps are commonly used by swimmers to both keep their hair out of their eyes whilst swimming and to keep their hair dry. Known caps are generally better at the former than at the latter, especially in the case of young children who will generally be able, one way or another, to get their hair wet.

Swimming caps are usually made of a plastic material having elastic properties such that the caps form a tight fit around the swimmer's head. Suitable materials include nylon-spandex blends, silicone, polyester, Neoprene and Latex.

Commercially available swimming caps tend to be utilitarian in design. They serve the purpose of covering the head and are very limited in terms of their design and aesthetic appearance. Manufacturers tend to differentiate their caps merely by colour and printed design. Of course, several variations of this generic swimming cap have been proposed and manufactured. For example, caps have been made which provide an internal pocket or space for accommodating longer hair. Such designs are not however aesthetically pleasing and do not appeal to a mass market. Another design, aimed primarily at keeping a swimmer's hair out of his or her eyes, has the appearance of a head band, or bandana, covering only the periphery of the swimmer's head. This design suffers from the disadvantage that it is difficult to keep in place, and will tend to slip in use, potentially covering the swimmer's eyes or otherwise becoming uncomfortable to wear.

Silicone and latex caps, designed to reduce drag and improve racing times, can be uncomfortably tight, difficult to put on, and are prone to falling off during swimming.

Existing spandex-lycra swimming caps, which are in contrast easy to take on and off, can result in unsightly and cumbersome bumps when hair is tucked in. These bumps may interfere with the straps of swimming goggles.

### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of the present to improve upon known swimming caps and in particular to provide a swimming cap which is both functional and attractive.

According to the present invention there is provided a swimming cap made of a synthetic rubber and sized to substantially cover the scalp of a wearer's head, the cap having an opening formed in a posterior region thereof such that the wearer's hair can pass through the opening to form a ponytail.

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a rear view of a swimming cap;

FIG. 2 is a side view of the cap of FIG. 1 with a ponytail shown projecting through the cap;

FIG. 3 is a rear view of an alternative embodiment of a swimming cap; and

FIGS. 4 and 5 illustrate an alternative cap such as might be used for diving or snorkeling.

### DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Particularly for swimmers with long hair, putting on and wearing a conventional swimming cap is difficult and

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uncomfortable. This can be particularly so for young children who are not very tolerant of having their hair twisted and pulled, and for lap swimmers who want to reduce cranial pressure caused by tight fitting caps. An improved swimming cap is proposed here which aim to solve these problems. This cap may be made of a conventional synthetic rubber, for example nylon, Latex, spandex-nylon blends, Neoprene, silicone rubber etc, but is provided with a hole at the back of the cap. The hole is sized and located such that a swimmer can pass his or her hair through the hole so that a "ponytail" hangs out of the back of the cap. The remainder of the swimmers head and hair remains covered by the cap. As well as being attractive, and offering an alternative to the existing generic swimming caps, the proposed design is extremely easy to put on as a swimmer can take hold of their hair, and put the cap on their head while passing the ponytail through the hole in the cap. The swimmer's hair does not get bunched up under the cap in this process.

FIG. 1 illustrates a swimming cap having this design. The cap is indicated by the reference numeral 1, whilst the hole formed in the back of the cap is indicated by reference numeral 2. As with conventional caps, the outer periphery 3 of the cap is elasticized so as to form a tighter fit, to the swimmer's head, around the outer periphery. FIG. 2 in turn illustrates the cap 1 with a ponytail 5 projecting through the hole 2.

FIGS. 1 and 2 both illustrate an advantageous feature of the proposed design. This comprises an elasticized band 4 provided around the circumference of the opening in the cap 1. This feature will tend to pull the cap tight around the projecting ponytail, reducing the possibility for water to leak through the hole 2 and into the underside of the cap.

This band 4 may be formed in a number of ways. For example, it could be an integral part of the cap, formed during the molding of the cap such that the region around the opening tends to pull together around the opening. Alternatively, an elasticated band may be sewn, glued, or otherwise fixed around the opening, e.g. with a seam. Such a feature is known as "ruching". Rounded and or flat elastics may also be incorporated into the opening along with safety stitching.

FIG. 3 illustrates a modified swimming cap design. In this design, the cap 5 is again provided with a hole 2. Provided in the region 7 beneath the opening 2 is an adjustment strap 8. This strap can be adjusted to vary the tightness of the bottom of the cap around the swimmer's head. The strap may comprise a Velcro® fastener 8 for easy use. Of course, other fasteners may be contemplated including buckles, press fasteners, soft snaps etc.

FIGS. 4 and 5 illustrate an alternative cap such as might be used for diving or snorkeling. The cap 10 is an all-over cap in so far as it covers the head and neck of the wearer, with a space at the front to allow the wearers face to show. Again, a hole 11 is provided at the back of the cap to allow the wearer's hair to be pulled through the hole, forming a ponytail 12.

It will be appreciated by the person of skill in the art that various modifications may be made to the above described embodiments without departing from the scope of the present invention.

The invention claimed is:

1. A swim cap consisting of a synthetic rubber dome comprising a front portion, a top portion, a lower peripheral edge, and a rear portion between the lower peripheral edge and the top portion, the lower peripheral edge when the dome is worn having an opening into an interior head space disposed within and enclosed by the dome, a center of the rear portion having a single hole through and completely

surrounded by the synthetic rubber, the hole communicating the interior head space with the outside, the hole is provided with an elasticized band around a circumference of the hole and positioned in the rear portion between the lower peripheral edge and the top portion and configured to, when the cap is worn, allow passing and exiting of within the interior head space through the hole and permit the hair to egress out of the dome and form a ponytail that hangs outside of the swim cap to thereby in use alleviate at least some cranial pressure the swim cap would otherwise apply.

2. The swim cap of claim 1 wherein the synthetic rubber is selected from the group consisting of nylon-spandex blends, silicone, polyester, neoprene, and latex.

3. The swim cap of claim 1 further comprising an adjustment strap providing an adjustment to vary the tightness of the lower peripheral edge around the swimmer's head.

4. The swim cap of claim 3 wherein the strap comprises a fastener.

5. The swim cap of claim 1 wherein the dome is molded.

6. The swim cap of claim 1 wherein the hole has a circular shape.

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